

Loughborough in

BLOOM

2018



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Chairman's welcome...

It has been a great privilege and honour to have taken over as Chair of the Bloom Board this year.

It is very clear what a committed group of people are involved in all parts of our efforts to make Loughborough look so lovely for all residents and visitors.

However, what is important is the pleasure, happiness and co-operation that happens between all parts of Bloom. That is so important.

Everyone is welcomed – young and old, any disability – there are important roles to play. Many groups involve people with various disabilities – we need and enjoy our gardening together.

It is also pleasing that more young people are getting involved in Bloom in various ways. School timetables are limited but some groups use Scout and Badger groups. One allotment project will be regularly visited by a school.

Children are welcomed to other groups and university students are helping out on various projects throughout the year.

Of course, as was mentioned last year, none of this would be possible without the support of our council officers, staff and outsourced green spaces department. We also have good support from our town, businesses and the university.

Marion Smith
Chairman, Loughborough in Bloom



Marion Smith, Chairman of
Loughborough in Bloom

Horticultural achievement

Impact

Loughborough has embraced this year's RHS theme of Greening Grey Britain for Wildlife.

The town's colour scheme this year is red, white and blue. Hanging basket trees in the town centre, main roundabouts and Epinal Way are all planted with sophinia's, to compliment the dressing of the town centre with red, white and blue bunting. The beacon within Queen's Park will be planted with green, white and blue to mark the centenary of voting rights for women and the Suffragette movement.

This year the swimming pool bed at Loughborough University has been planted as a dove of peace. One of the campus flower beds has been grassed over and the area replaced with mechanical bulb planting consisting of Crocus, Puschkinia Libanotica, Tulip turkestanica, Tulip high mixed, Muscari, Chionodoxa pink giant and Narcis Lobularis. The beds at the Bastard Gate entrance have been replaced with sustainable permanent planting.

Sustainable planting in Queen's Park with the new wetland area continue to mature. The garden is made up of numerous varieties of moisture loving wetland plants. They encourage insect and amphibious activity and create a habitat that is perfect for this year's theme.

Two agapanthus beds in Queen's Park have been established with bulbs supplied by Lubbe Lisse Flowerbulbs.

The hanging basket trees at the entrance to the town each hold 21 baskets and are all sustainable and self-watering. There are also five hanging basket trees in the town centre. The main town centre planting schemes



Queen's Park floral displays

are also followed by local businesses and Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID). Their hanging basket and trough displays are coordinated by the BID, in consultation with Charnwood Borough Council and idverde.

Continuing with the development of the Loughborough inner relief road, 30 barrier boxes will be planted with red, white and blue sophinia's and salvia's, placed at key locations to add colour along the route. The boxes have been sponsored by the Council's waste contractor, Serco and made by Plantscape. They have been delivered in partnership with Leicestershire County Council.



Forest Road Green Belt planting day

Horticultural practice

Loughborough's open spaces are maintained by idverde, community groups and volunteers.

Communication between Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council has played a big part in improved horticultural practice this year. The councils have worked together which has improved grass cutting and weed spraying schedules to compliment other areas of grass owned by the borough council and cut by idverde.

For council-owned areas, herbicides are used as little as possible and pesticides are only used on sports fields to ensure areas continue to be suitable for play. These are used sparingly so there is no long lasting impact or danger to wildlife.

idverde has introduced more sustainable planting along the ring roads, including mechanical bulb planting on Epinal Way. The planters now have a more sustainable planting scheme, and are topped up with more plants in the summer.

In Queen's Park the bedding by the bridge was reduced by half in 2017 by putting in a permanent planting scheme. This has proven very successful and increased the amount of sustainable planting in the park.

Plantscape has provided over 297 elevated planters to brighten Loughborough's streets, main roads and roundabouts and the BID have installed additional hanging baskets along the frontage of shops and businesses.

idverde continues to take part in the RHS reuse scheme at Hampton Court and Chatsworth House. Materials which are used in the shows and no longer required are donated to local community groups.

There are many green spaces in Loughborough which would not remain as beautiful and well looked-after without the continued support of volunteer groups. There are numerous examples of how local community groups help the Bloom effort all year-round, which can be seen throughout the portfolio.

Business areas & premises

Businesses are represented on the Loughborough in Bloom Board by the Love Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID), and the Loughborough Chamber of Trade and Commerce. Together they represent more than 700 businesses within the town, so they play a key part in the Bloom effort.

In October 2017 businesses voted for the BID to be renewed for a second five-year term and it has committed to continue to support Bloom.



The Chamber looks forward to continuing its support for Bloom and will be urging local businesses to be directly involved by dressing their premises with hanging baskets and troughs.

This will not only improve their property but also enhance the overall appearance of Loughborough Town Centre.”

***Dermot Breen, President
Loughborough Chamber of Trade and
Commerce***



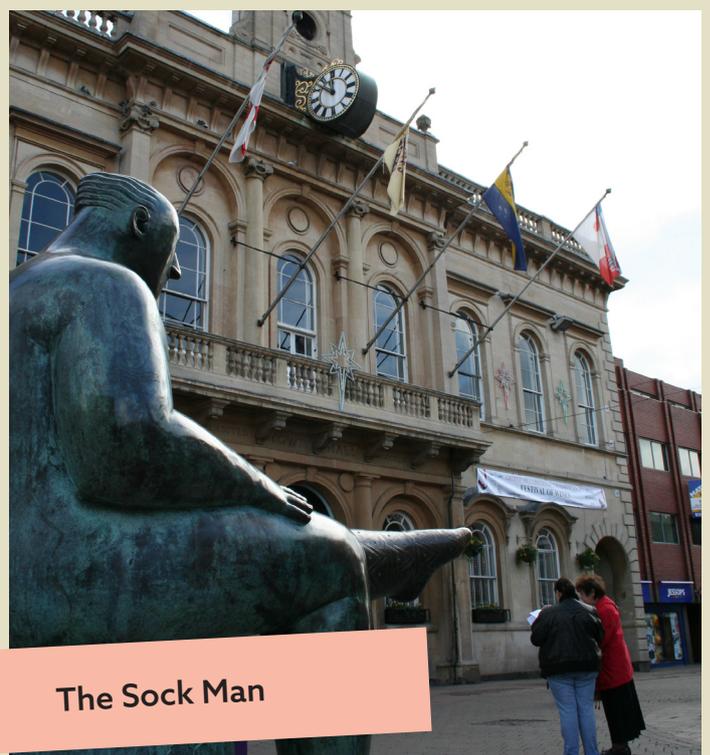
Bunting in the town centre



We're proud and pleased to be supporting the multi-award winning Bloom in making our town look so colourful, so inviting and so pleasurable to visit, shop and work in.

We, the businesses and our partners will continue to make sure our town centre is not only fit for purpose but a vibrant and fun place to shop and socialise in.”

***Lez Cope-Newman, Chair
Love Loughborough***



The Sock Man

Residential & community gardening

The hard work of Loughborough's many community groups and individual gardeners is the life blood of Loughborough in Bloom. This year 39 groups are participating in 'It's Your Neighbourhood'.

The Community Participation Group (CPG) meets regularly throughout the year to help existing groups to flourish and encourage new groups to set up and take part.

The Three Close Tenants' Association and the Chapman Street Gardeners work hard to keep their communal areas looking welcoming with floral displays.

At John Storer House their 'Digging for Health' project encourages people to get back into nature in the garden and use the physical activity of gardening to help promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

Fearon Hall and Transition Loughborough support Utilise Loughborough, a social enterprise which brings the local community together to help reduce food waste. Each week leftover food from local supermarkets which would have just gone to landfill is rescued and served up at the Utilise Cafe.

The annual tenants gardening competition was launched in May for all Council tenants to show off their green-fingered skills. Gardens can be entered under one of the following categories:

- house or flat garden
- hanging basket, window box or balcony
- the Norman Storr award for communal garden
- sheltered court garden

Lots of residents also entered this year's Best Spring Floral Displays competition and the town looked blooming marvellous.

Thorpe Acre Residents' Association have been working hard all year and have installed new planters, which were made by Glebe House. Residents used leftover flowers from other projects to fill them.



Glebe House project

Green spaces

Despite being the largest town in the north of Leicestershire, there are many areas of green spaces within Loughborough. Some of the largest parks in the town are Queen's Park, Southfields Park and Sidings Park.

Open spaces

Queen's Park retained its Green Flag last year and awaits the results of this year's judging. It remains one of the town's focal points, with all floral displays created by idverde.

In 2016 the park was the principal winner of a prestigious British Association of Landscape Industries' (BALI) National Landscape Award for its grounds maintenance. Receiving a BALI National Landscape Award is one of the landscape industries' highest accolades and is a recognition of a high level of achievement, from within the industry.

Queen's Park was also highly commended in the Bees Knees Awards 2016.

Local voluntary group, Friends of Queen's Park, also play a key part in helping look after the area, maintaining its Victorian roots by weeding and voluntary work.

The park is brought to life throughout the year with events such as Picnic in the Park, bandstand concerts and Armed Forces Day.

Southfields Park features a skate-park and facilities for free running and parkour, alongside traditional rugby posts. The park embraces the urban sports alongside its green open spaces.

This year several parks are being revamped by Charnwood Borough Council. Kirkstone Park has received a £50,000 upgrade to include new paths, play structures, seating and additional landscaping. The Bell Foundry estate will have £67,000 improvements to create a new pocket park which will provide a much needed community focal point.

Southfields Park itself will be subject of a £200,000 upgrade, including the installation of new outdoor gym equipment, skate park extension, new gateway entrance and internal access improvements.

Park improvements are both funded from an internal capital improvement scheme and from section 106 agreements from local developments built in the area, in order to meet their commitment to the Council to improve the community they are building in.

The Outwoods is 110 acres of ancient woodland to the north of Loughborough and is one of the oldest surviving woodland sites in Charnwood. It is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by Natural England, which means it is protected by law to conserve its wildlife and geology.

The Outwoods was gifted to the people of Loughborough in 1946 by two local benefactors, Alan Moss and George Harry Bowler, and is managed by the Outwoods Management Committee.

In 2017, for the tenth year running The Outwoods was awarded the Green Flag, this is a nationally recognised mark of excellence for a well-managed green space.

The woods consist of a variety of different routes and walks, including an easy access path with a bird hide and feeding station. Walkers with mobility issues can also use the trampers which are provided free of charge by the management committee.

May is a blooming time for the forest as it becomes carpeted with bluebells.

900 native trees were planted at The Outwoods this winter to help the woodland area flourish. The work is part of a five-year Countryside Stewardship Scheme run by Natural England and the Forestry Commission which aims to preserve the fragile ecology and habitats found in the site.

Charnwood Forest is a distinctive area of rugged landscape, which extends across Leicestershire within; Charnwood Borough, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough and the North West Leicestershire District.

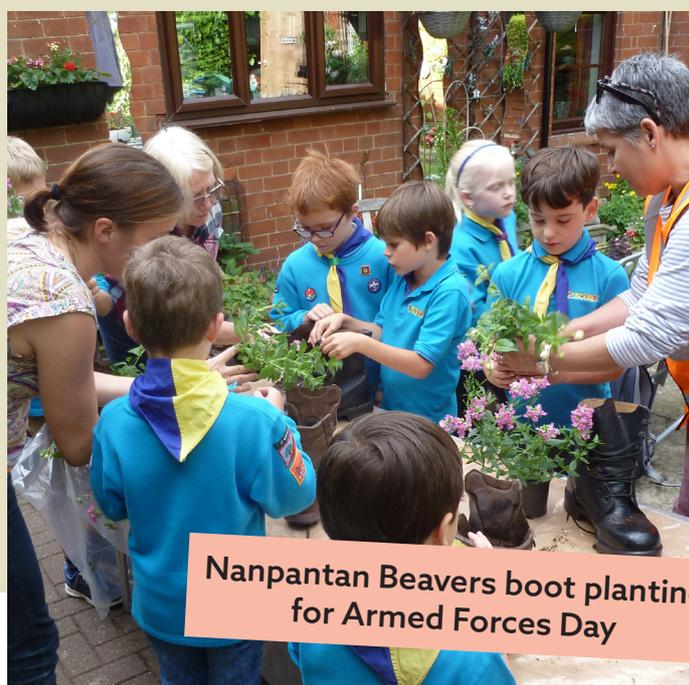
Rare fossils have been discovered in the hard Precambrian rock outcrops which are found throughout Charnwood Forest, including The Outwoods. The fossils are of international importance to the understanding of the early evolution of life forms. Examples of the 'Charnia' fossils can be viewed in the New Walk Museum in Leicester and Charnwood Museum in Queen's Park, Loughborough.



Bluebells in The Outwoods



Green belt planting



Nanpantan Beavers boot planting for Armed Forces Day

How we maintain our open spaces...

The borough council is responsible for managing and maintaining Charnwood's green spaces. It is supported by its grounds maintenance partner, idverde which provides high quality services to ensure the town looks its best all year round.

Leicestershire County Council carries out all maintenance to roundabouts and roadside grass verges. This year the council has introduced new machinery to improve the quality of grass cutting in the borough.



Green Gym volunteers in Queen's Park

The Green Gym...

The Green Gym initiative is run by the borough council in partnership with idverde and is a refreshing approach to outdoor exercise, designed to improve people's health and wellbeing and make a positive impact on the local environment.

During each session the ranger team guide volunteers through conservation activities such as coppicing, hedge laying, fencing and renewing footpaths. Volunteers learn new skills whilst improving their health and fitness. In fact, almost a third more calories can be burnt in some Green Gym sessions than in an average aerobics class!

The free activities are also designed in order to benefit the local area, depending on what is required throughout the year.



Finished bug boxes in the wildlife area

Help from our community groups...

Local community groups also work hard to maintain the town's green spaces, including Thorpe Acre Residents' Association. The group maintains a spinney within Thorpe Acre and has worked hard to enhance the area.

Local residents, Harry and Pat Cook have created a magical experience at the Forest Road Green Belt with a fairy trail and bug gardens. Their hard work was rewarded in 2016 with a Community Green Flag award. Since then the green belt has gone from strength to strength and is hopeful for its third Green Flag award this year.

Allotments in Loughborough...

Allotments are an important part of our culture and provide a wide range of benefits to communities and to the environment. They have many advantages such as providing fresh vegetables, fruit and flowers, free from pollutants, at a fraction of the cost paid in supermarkets.

They also provide valuable recreational opportunities for healthy physical activity and social contact, a place where people can relax and unwind. Allotments make a significant contribution to our green spaces, and provide habitats for many forms of wildlife.

Case study: The 6th Loughborough Brownies community project

The 6th Loughborough Brownies are based at the United Reform Church on Frederick Street. Their Brown Owl Leader Helen Cliffe, wanted to organise an activity with her pack in Queen's Park in response to the 'helping our community' aspect of the Girl Guiding programme.

idverde and the Friends of Queen's Park were delighted to be of assistance and help them with their project.

The first task for the girls was to sow the wild flower seed that was sent to them from Royal Botanical Kew Gardens onto the aviary bed to give it some temporary colour whilst under construction.



Brownies learn how to make bird feeders



The Brownies at Charnwood Museum

The next task was for the group to pull out the old spring bedding under supervision from idverde staff, the Friends of Queen's Park and their leaders to make way for the new summer bedding.

The Brownies then turned their attention to helping the birds that also reside in the park by making some extra special bird feeders.

Environmental responsibility

Conservation & biodiversity

Grange Park, Stonebow Washlands and The Outwoods regularly benefit from the work of volunteers to ensure Loughborough continues to protect and enhance local wildlife.

Activities including the management of wildflower meadows, coppicing, shrub clearance, hedge laying and the creation of paths are organised throughout the year.

Stonebow Washlands is part of Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship Scheme and is managed by idverde, on behalf of the borough council. The area was created in the 1980s to alleviate the flood risk to Thorpe Acre and is a rich wildlife site and recreational space for people to enjoy.

Stonebow Washlands was designated a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in 2017. This has given the area greater protection from any possible development and could help attract funding for improvements in the future.

Important habitats at Stonebow include semi-natural grassland, standing water bodies, streams and wet woodland. There is also a good range of grassland species including hairy sedge and marsh marigold and a significant community of common frog and toad.

The meadows are in the HLS scheme and are specifically managed to encourage the Brown Meadow Butterfly for whom it is an important habitat.

The Friends of Stonebow Community Volunteer Group continue to go from strength to strength since its formation. The group looks after the



Moorhen chick at Stonebow

local area at Stonebow and has helped with projects including a bat walk.

In addition to Stonebow, the borough council propose to designate three more new Local Nature Reserves in Loughborough. Gorse Covert is an important community woodland site in Thorpe Acre, primarily composed of oak and ash high forest. The site will be designated as a Local Nature Reserve this year. A new management plan for the site has been developed and volunteers have already started improving access for the local community.

Loughborough boasts two other Higher Level Stewardship Scheme sites at Bishop Meadow LNR and Pignut Spinney; these are grassland sites which are full of a diverse number of species. The natural management of these areas is designed to enhance the floral value. At Bishops Meadow low intensity grazing with rare breed cattle takes place in partnership with a local farmer.

In 2010 wildflower planting was introduced across Loughborough and continues to spread across the town. Since 2014 the town has embraced the Bloom theme and encouraged more pollinating insects to the area.

There are more than 40 species of birds that nest on the Loughborough University campus, including pheasants, kingfishers and buzzards. Specifically designated wildlife areas have been created across the site to further boost woodland and other species. A colony of bees was introduced in 2013 and the university

produced its first home-grown honey in 2014.

A group of kestrels have returned to their nest at the Loughborough campus this year. The kestrels (known collectively as a flight, soar or hover) have been nesting at the university for four years. Initially, they nested on a site that was difficult to monitor, so a nest box was set up in a more accessible area. In the first year, the mother had three chicks, four in the second year, and last year she produced five.

The university have now installed a nest box with a fitted camera, so their activity can be monitored and a live stream provided on YouTube for people to watch. This will also help monitor what the chicks are feeding on, so that management of the grounds can be adapted to encourage more of that type of wildlife and balance the habitat.

Bird boxes have also sprung up across the town, with instant habitats installed in The Outwoods and Queen's Park. Members of the Thorpe Acre Residents' Group have also provided bird and bat boxes for use on the Forest Road Green Belt, adding to the small collection introduced in 2014.

Conservation volunteers

idverde runs a successful conservation volunteer programme once a week. The programme encourages projects at some of Loughborough's most important wildlife sites.

The volunteers learn new skills, make new friends and enjoy access to some wonderful wildlife, under the supervision of idverde's ranger service. Tasks range from renewing pathways at Stonebow Washlands to removing invasive species and fence replacement.

The university gardens team encourage the students to get involved with their woodland management over the year. The Action students have assisted with coppicing trees, building nature habitats and natural fences.



Volunteers in action

Resource management

During the dry seasons, idverde has access to a 600 gallon water storage tank at Charnwood Water. Water from the man-made lake is used to water nearby beds if they are threatened by drought.

Water butts are used by a number of community groups to gather water in an environmentally friendly way and ensure natural resources are used as much as possible before the need for hose pipes.

idverde uses mulch, including lime bark, to retain water on beds, alongside gel beads to hold some of the water and keep it in the soil, reducing the need to water the areas.

The Plantscape hanging baskets help reduce our carbon footprint as they are self-watering and fully recyclable.

When large beds are replanted, leaving plants in need of a new home, any remaining flowers or shrubs are donated to local community groups for them to be re-used. This can represent the start of a new flower bed for different groups and provides a splash of colour while waiting for seedlings to mature.

Loughborough University continues to use a mechanical bulb planting programme alongside their traditional annual programme; this has led to more than 30,000 bulbs being planted across various vast campuses that will continue to bloom in the future.

Mechanical bulb planting has also been undertaken by idverde on Alan Moss Road to plant daffodils. They are looking at plans to continue this elsewhere.

Serco provides a mixed recycling service which makes it much easier for residents to use and in turn reduces the amount of rubbish going to landfill.



No green waste leaves the university campus, everything is shredded and left to compost, turned over the years and then either reintroduced to the campus shrub beds as a soil enhancer or sieved and used as topsoil for reinstating grass areas.

Charnwood Borough Council's allotment tenants are offered composting facilities and free green waste collection to ensure that all waste produced is used in the most effective way possible. Composting is also promoted by Leicestershire County Council, who offer reduced-price compost bins for anyone looking to use the nutrients from leftovers.

Composting skills are also shared by a network of Master Composter volunteers. Individuals are encouraged, by Leicestershire County Council, to use their experience of composting to help those who have never given it a go.

The Council's annual student clean up, held before the summer holidays, encourages students to have a tidy-up of their homes and gardens, while also encouraging donations to charity. In June 2017 the initiative resulted in 23 tonnes of rubbish being collected during the day, 16 tonnes of which was recyclable.

Local heritage

Loughborough has a very rich local heritage that continues to be celebrated by local artists and organisations.

The Victorian Queen's Park opened in 1899 to commemorate Queen Victoria's jubilee and continues to showcase vibrant plant displays and events throughout the year.

The park is also home to Charnwood Museum, originally a swimming pool, which celebrates the history of Charnwood, including its Jurassic past.

The Carillon War Memorial is a grade II listed building and forms the central feature of the space. From the viewing gallery at the top of the Carillon, located in Queen's Park, Loughborough, there are excellent views of the Charnwood area.

Built in 1922, the memorial and carillon houses 47 bells which were crafted by the world renowned John Taylor & Co. Bell Foundry. Inside the building there is a wealth of exhibits relating to all branches of the armed services including local materials from both World Wars.

The landmark is also a musical instrument for which Edward Elgar wrote the opening ceremony score.

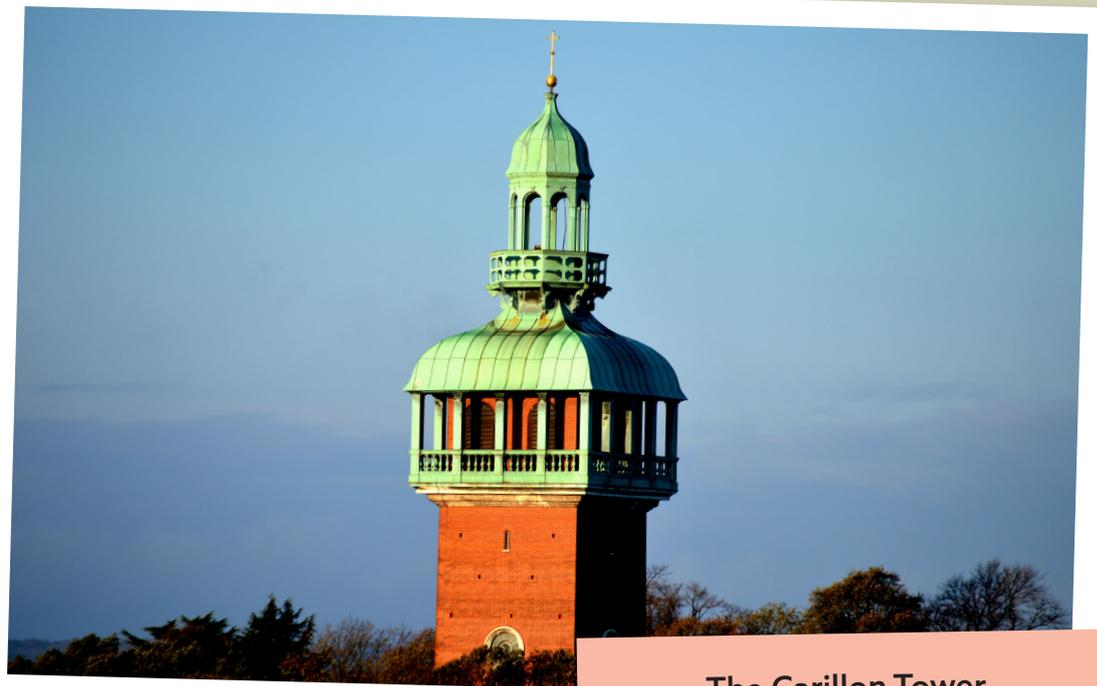
The Carillon is currently undergoing a major refurbishment costing £280,000. The works will be completed in time for 11 November 2018 when the nation marks 100 years since the end of the First World War.

Taylor's Bell Foundry, one of the oldest Loughborough-based businesses, is famed for casting the largest bell in Britain, Great Paul, which is hung in St Paul's Cathedral. The bell case used to cast the bell is also proudly displayed within Queen's Park as a focal point for planting displays.

Angel Yard has been awarded a Green Plaque from Leicestershire County Council. The plaque celebrates the building's heritage as the original home of Ladybird Books.

The Loogabaroooga festival of children's illustrated literature returned for its third successive year in October 2017. The nine-day festival started in 2015 as a celebration of 100 years of Ladybird Book's, authors and illustrators, showcase new and existing children's books during the interactive and fun-filled festival.

Loughborough's Cattle Market is brought to life with a bespoke piece of artwork created by Wei Ong. The piece covers Loughborough across the seasons and references the town's people, landmarks and history.



The Carillon Tower

Local environmental quality

The borough council has launched its 2020 carbon pledge which aims to reduce its carbon footprint by 15 per cent by 2020.

The Council has drawn up a carbon management plan with the Carbon Trust which sets out measures to reduce the borough's carbon footprint, including reducing LED lighting in communal areas of sheltered housing and improving heating in council buildings.

Residents in Loughborough are provided with an alternative weekly recycling and waste collection service. This has reduced the amount of waste going to landfill and has encouraged more recycling from residents.

The Council's #RecycleRight campaign aims to encourage people not to put clothing and textiles into their green recycling bin. Last year

more than 700 tonnes of textiles were put into recycling bins which then had to be incinerated.

The #RecycleRight campaign, in partnership with Serco, Loughborough University and local charities, is asking people to think twice and take their clothes to a recycling bank, or give them to charity.

In addition to recycling, a garden waste service is provided to residents for a reasonable cost and reduces the journeys by car to local waste disposal sites.

Real Christmas trees are also collected as part of the service. All garden waste collected is then composted at an outdoor composting facility and sold on as a soil improver to residents in Leicestershire.



Carbon tree planting

The Conservation volunteers are an army of outdoor enthusiasts who work on a variety of green projects, from hedge laying to litter picking. The Council and local communities also work with the probation service to encourage young offenders to help keep green areas tidy while developing new skills.

This year the council and partners took part in Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean and supported local community groups to come together to litter pick over one weekend.

Pride of place

Street furniture in Loughborough town centre, including bus shelters and benches, are cleaned and maintained by Charnwood Borough Council's partners, idverde and Serco.

Community wardens and street wardens also patrol the town and report problems, including fly-tipping, litter and graffiti. The litter bins have been replaced with brand new stainless steel bins, to ensure they remain looking clean and tidy.

Signs welcoming people to Loughborough are at the seven entrances to the town. The signs celebrate one of the town's most iconic features, the Carillon War Memorial.

This year there will be five hanging-basket trees in the town centre, which will be planted in red, white and blue. Bunting has also been put up around the town.

Art has been used in another part of the town, to enhance the look and feel of the area.

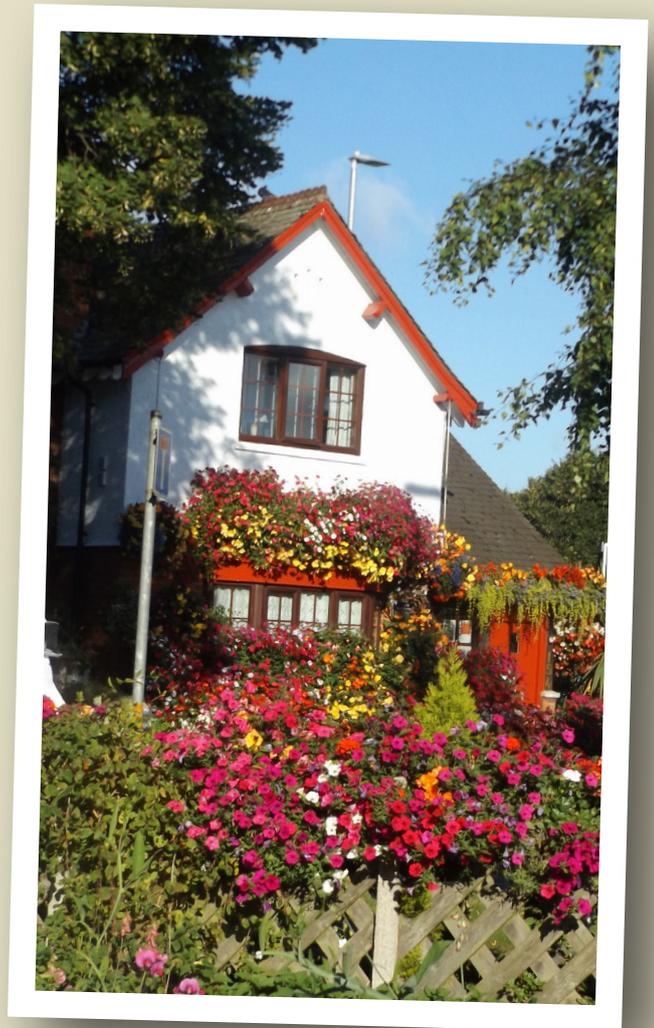
Bristol-based artist Wei Ong (Silent Hobo) designed the 60m artwork in Devonshire Square after speaking to local people and visitors about what Loughborough meant to them. Wei also created a piece about Lady Jane Grey, which is on display in the Market Yard.

In May 2016 a new Cineworld complex opened, which is part of a multi-million pound development in the heart of the town. The area will also have a number of new restaurants and bars, which will boost the town's night-time economy.

Loughborough's award-winning market has been part of the town's history for almost 800 years and is rich in character, atmosphere and colour.

In 2017 Loughborough retail market won the Best Large Outdoor Market of the year award. It was recognised for the support it gives to traders and its work with Loughborough University.

The market was praised for supporting traders with its 'Try a Trade' offer, which allows people to have a free stall on the market for a day and 50 per cent off a stall for three months, to help local entrepreneurs grow their business.



Community participation

Development and community

The Loughborough in Bloom campaign is supported by the Bloom Board, which is made up of key decision makers from across the town.

The Bloom Board is chaired by Marion Smith and meetings take place throughout the year to ensure the campaign continues to grow.

Local residents join the chair of the Community Participation Group, Marion Smith, alongside representatives from Charnwood Borough Council, Leicestershire County Council, Loughborough University, the Business Improvement District, Chamber of Trade and Commerce and idverde.

Over the last year Loughborough University has continued to extend the fruit route. In excess of 150 trees have now been planted on a specific trail around campus. Some of the trees planted include, apple, cherry, plum, pear, apricot, sweet chestnut, fig and grape vine. In addition to this a small heritage orchard has been created independent

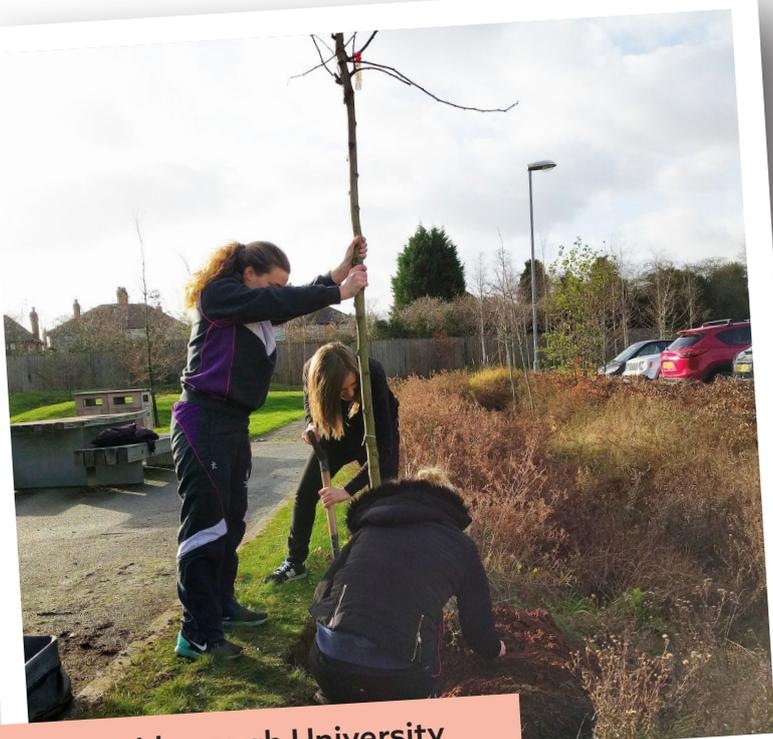
to the fruit route consisting of local apple varieties of Burton-Leicester Pippin, Martins Custard, Barnack Orange, Langton Nonesuch and St Ailred. This will be added to over the next few years.

The Loughborough Men in Sheds charity has also helped the Bloom effort by building and improving upon the planters which have been positioned outside John Storer House as an extension of their allotments. The planters will be maintained by the volunteers and are part of a scheme to encourage community access to allotment produce.

The compost for the planters has been donated by Leicestershire County Council's site at Lount and their contractor, Suez.



Loughborough University tree planting



Loughborough University students tree planting

Community & education

The town's local newspaper, the Loughborough Echo, has been at the heart of the Loughborough in Bloom campaign since it was launched in 2009.

Regular updates and Bloom news are included within the weekly paper and the Editor, Andy Rush, continues to develop the campaign as a member of the Loughborough in Bloom Board.

The Loughborough in Bloom blog has regular updates throughout the year and the work of volunteers is shared on social media.

idverde has a community website which features the latest case studies on activities with volunteer and third sector groups.

The town's Scouts movement has continued to engage youngsters in growing, planting and celebrating wildlife.

Both the Three Close Tenants' Association and Harry and Pat Cook of Forest Road Green Belt have worked with probation service trainees to tend and improve the local areas.

In March 2017 the Community Participation Group were given a presentation by Alison McGrath of Garden Organic supported by Ted Boyd a Master Composter to help them support community groups with their planting.

The award-winning Don't Muck Around campaign carries different themes each year to engage different target audiences.

Street Wardens deal with environmental crime and on and off street parking enforcement. They issue parking tickets and fines for dog control offences, littering and other environmental crimes. There are also enforcement officers who deal with fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles and waste issues, they have a very good reputation for tackling the issues head on.

Each year the Council works to design new and innovative ways to discuss the issues. This year's campaign is a county and city wide campaign about

fly tipping and duty of care. The #IfOnly campaign is a far reaching video and radio campaign with case studies of characters based on real life stories about people who got it wrong and how to do it right.

Prosecutions for these offences are one way of deterring people from dumping their rubbish or failing to clean up after their pet. In 2017 the council investigated 782 incidents of fly-tipping, dropped litter and dog fouling and had three prosecutions and issued 49 fixed penalty notices.

The Council also works alongside Serco and Leicestershire County Council to increase recycling rates in the town, reducing the amount of waste from the area that goes to landfill. In 2016 Loughborough's recycling rate was 47 per cent.

Bloom groups continue to contribute to recycling, by producing their own compost and sharing it with other groups, and taking advantage of free garden waste collections from the borough council.

Litter picking is carried out throughout the year by various community groups and with the help of volunteers who lend a hand to projects. The quality of a number of areas, from individual patches of land to estates is also maintained by members of the community.

Charnwood Borough Council provides free garden waste bins to the various It's Your Neighbourhood groups so that green waste can be composted and not go to landfill.



Community participation

Community participation in Loughborough continues to drive the Bloom campaign. Each year the number of It's Your Neighbourhood groups increases, this year a total of 39 organisations have signed up to take a very active role. There are other groups, individuals and businesses who also contribute in other ways.

Loughborough Student Action continues to urge as many of the university's students to pick up a trowel and support projects under the Bloom umbrella. Each year, more than 2,000 volunteers take part in litter picking and gardening and maintenance projects across the borough.

This year students from the university and local business, 3M carried out weeding at Loughborough station. A group of students also weeded Loughborough cemetery to keep the area looking tidy.

A university owned hotel, The Link, continues to get involved with the Bloom initiative, the three flower beds that were created in 2016 to enhance the entrance and grounds of the hotel are still being maintained each season.

Transition Loughborough organised a Potato Day at Loughborough Market. People could buy cheap seed potatoes to grow their own crops. They also arranged a seed swap at Fearon Hall Community Centre, where people brought their surplus seeds and exchanged them with other people. The seeds were harvested from previous year's plants.

Each year competitions are run to engage the local community. Charnwood Borough Council currently runs a tenant garden competition to judge the best house or flat garden, hanging basket, window box or balcony, communal garden and sheltered court garden.

Fearon Hall runs the Utilise Social Café in partnership with Enactus and Transition Loughborough. The café serves delicious meals for the community made from ingredients which would have otherwise gone to landfill.



Loughborough Student Action relaying footpath with woodchip

Case study: Isaac Newton Tree Loughborough University

The university is set to clone the tree that inspired Sir Isaac Newton's theory of gravity after being gifted a selection of cuttings. On 8 March 2018, Professors of Mathematical Sciences and members of the Grounds and Gardens team headed to Newton's childhood home Woolsthorpe Manor.



The university was invited to the ceremonial clipping of the apple tree that caused the English physicist and mathematician to question why objects always fall straight down to the ground – leading to his discovery of the law of gravitation.

The apple tree is an old variety known as 'Flower of Kent' which is not commonly grown nowadays. The university was gifted five cuttings due to an informal co-operation between Loughborough University Mathematics department and the National Trust at Woolsthorpe.

The University Grounds and Gardens team will now attach each of the tree cuttings to underground stems known as rootstocks. It is hoped they will join together permanently and continue to grow as a single organism – creating 'clones' of Newton's Tree. After two years of developing, the young trees will be ready to plant on the Loughborough University campus. One will be planted near the entrance to the Schofield Building as a reminder of the contribution Newton made to applied mathematics.



Isaac Newton tree

Case study: Forest Road Green Belt Gardeners & the Loughborough Scout Group

Pat and Harry Cook invited the Scouts for an evening session of building bird boxes, bug hotels and making various bird feeders to further improve the site they care for.

Together, a great deal of fun (and mess) was had making natural bird feeders from pine cones, which were collected from the green belt, dipping them into honey and rolling them in bird seed. The group also cut up apples and stuck sunflower seeds into the flesh.

The feeders were then hung onto a frame. Once the frame was full of bird feeders it resembled a Christmas tree - full of 'goodies' for the local birds!



Scouts making bird feeders

Case study: GROW Loughborough

GROW Loughborough is a weekend event showcasing local projects with a social ethos. The projects are open to the public and promote the connections between creativity, gardening and wellbeing.

The project originates from the National Garden Scheme (NGS) Open Gardens and Secret Craft Fair on and around Herrick Road in Loughborough since 2013, which grew to have a wellbeing theme in 2016.

This year Janet Currie (freelance creative project manager) and Lisa Pidgeon (Director of Little Bird SOS) are working with a range of partners to raise awareness of local projects that offer activities to increase wellbeing, reduce social isolation, encourage creativity, support participation in community gardening, and encourage growing your own food.

The weekend event took place over 16 and 17 June 2018. You can find more information at www.growloughborough.org.uk



GROW event

Case study: university students at Loughborough cemetery

A group of student volunteers from Loughborough University volunteered at Loughborough's old cemetery every Wednesday afternoon during February.

The students spent their afternoon helping to remove self-set holly trees from the graves within the closed cemetery known locally as, 'the old cemetery', and raking through the shrub borders.

Paul Day and Peter Hancock, who are looking to form a Friends of Loughborough Cemetery group, were delighted to see so many volunteers in the cemetery. Paul commented, "It's wonderful to see the younger generation take such a genuine interest in Loughborough's heritage whilst helping to make the place look smarter. We're very grateful to them."



Loughborough University students



Marios Tinenti volunteers

Case study: Marios Tinenti Centre community litter pick

Residents, along with the local PCSO from Leicestershire's Local Neighbourhood Police Force, were inspired to volunteer for a few hours and get outdoors to pick up some of the litter in the Bell Foundry residential area.

With the support of idverde and the borough council's community housing officers, the volunteers managed to collect over 10 bags of litter and other rubbish which included plastic tubs, lengths of pipe and other unwanted bits of junk which had been fly-tipped in the streets. The bags were later taken away by Serco to be disposed of correctly.

Following all that hard work the volunteers were rewarded for their efforts with a buffet lunch which was kindly supplied by the Marios Tinenti Centre.

One volunteer said "It's amazing how much litter we all managed to collect in such a relatively short space of time. Thanks to the support we feel we've improved our local area."

Funding & support

The Loughborough in Bloom campaign is underpinned by volunteers and keen gardeners who work to keep their area blossoming. Some volunteers have taken part since 2009, while this is the first year of entry for others.

Every year the Loughborough Students Union Action Volunteers, a team of more than 2,000 volunteers, works with community groups and organisations to complete a range of activities that benefit the town. Work includes litter picking, planting days and supporting groups with regular events.

Voluntary groups including Transition Loughborough, Charnwood Conservation Volunteers, Loughborough Tow Path Pickers and G&S Services have also kindly offered their support to many green causes too.

To boost the voluntary effort, Charnwood Borough Council, Serco, idverde, Leicestershire County Council and the Business Improvement District

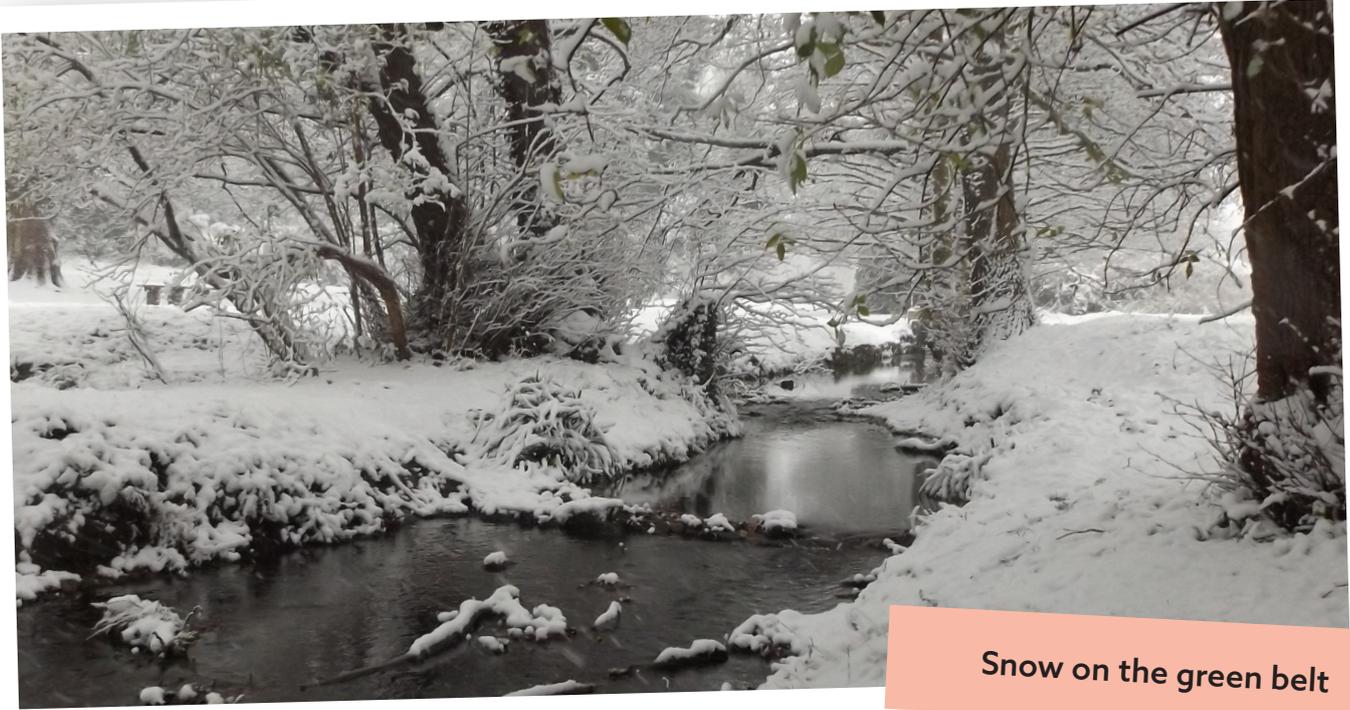
provide funding to ensure that Loughborough continues to Bloom. Some of the funding covers a range of initiatives, while others, such as that from Mike and Marj Jones, pay for hanging baskets or displays in specific areas. Individual community groups are also supported by sponsorship and assistance from local businesses, such as Hathern Nurseries, Pinnacle and B&Q.

Serco have again kindly provided a further £5,000 towards the Bloom effort this year, while Plantscape are sponsoring a hanging basket tree in the town centre. The Markets and Fairs team at Charnwood Borough Council will also sponsor a hanging basket tree.

Local groups also raise funds by selling plants and items that they have created. John Storer House continues to sell plants to fund the cottage garden and allotment, to allow their Bloom efforts to be self-sufficient.



Loughborough Student Action setting daffodil bulbs



Snow on the green belt

Year round involvement

Bloom participants are kept up-to-date with events taking place across the year through the Loughborough Echo and the Loughborough in Bloom website. Community groups meet regularly at the Bloom Community Participation Group.

Events that take place outside of the judging season continue and are embraced by the town to ensure that Loughborough continues to bloom all year round.

Harry Cook leads the town's Christmas efforts, annually transforming his garden into a Santa's grotto.

Spring is always a colourful time at Loughborough University. A mechanical bulb planting program has been running for the last five years to supplement its annual program, naturalising approximately 30,000 assorted bulbs at various locations across campus which will continue for the foreseeable future.

This year local school children have been involved in the 'military boots' project. 100 boots have been donated by ex-servicemen and women and have been planted by local children to provide an attractive display. The boots were brought together at Armed Forces Day on 30 June 2018 in recognition of the centenary of World War One.

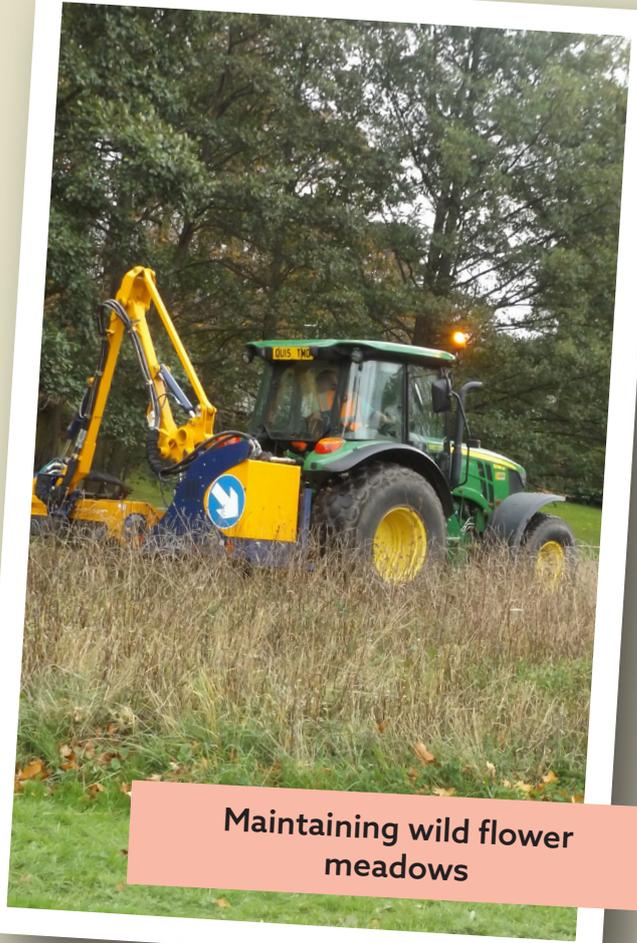
There was the opportunity to learn how to grow your own food, get involved with community gardening projects and take part in plant swaps.

The Master Gardeners were on hand to offer support and Steve King from Transition Loughborough held a workshop about gardening for health and wellbeing.

There was also information on bee keeping, a crop club and the university fruit routes.

Future plans

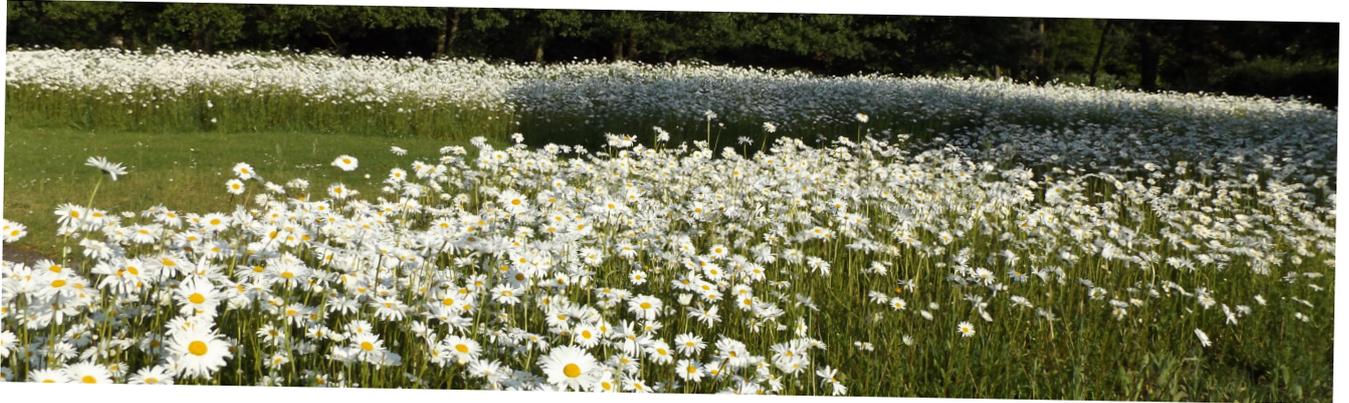
- In partnership with the borough council, idverde will continue to work towards establishing more Green Flag green spaces and new Local Nature Reserves within Loughborough.
- Funding will be secured to create a wood carving at the Forest Road Green Belt. Residents will be consulted on what design they would like to see.
- idverde is working with Three Close Tenants to increase mechanical bulb planting.
- A successful application has been made for funding for a community noticeboard for the Friends of Queen's Park.
- Plantscape continue to sponsor a hanging basket tree within the town centre.
- In partnership with Loughborough College we will hold an annual 'Bake off' competition.
- A new country park is proposed at the former Allsopps Lane landfill site which will provide a significant area of green space and recreation on the edge of Loughborough.



Maintaining wild flower meadows



Green belt planting



Contributors

- The Abbeyfield Loughborough Society Gardens
- Age UK Men in Sheds
- Ashby Road Estate Green Fingers
- Beacon Road Flats Gardeners
- Chapman Street Gardeners
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Clear Cut Conservation
- Emmanuel Church
- Fearon Community Association
- The Flower Pot People
- Forest Road Green Belt Gardeners
- Freehold Street Bloomers
- Friends of Queen's Park
- Garden Buddies
- Garendon Green Gardeners
- Glebe House Allotment Project
- Great Central Railway
- Green Gym
- GROW Loughborough
- Holt Green Gardeners
- idverde
- John Taylor Bell Foundry
- John Storer Charnwood Allotment
- John Storer House Cottage Garden
- King Edward Road Gardeners
- Knightthorpe Methodist Gardeners
- Loughborough Baptist Church
- Loughborough Lions Club
- Loughborough Student Union Landscape and Gardening Society
- Leicestershire County Council
- Leicestershire & Rutland Fire Service
- Loughborough Business Improvement District
- Loughborough Chamber of Trade and Commerce
- Loughborough District Scouts
- Loughborough Echo
- Loughborough Endowed Schools
- Loughborough University
- Marios Tinenti Centre
- Park Court Gardeners
- Peter Le Marchant Trust
- Peter Minshall, Photographer
- PHS Greenleaf
- Primary Schools of Loughborough
- Rainbow Children's Hospice
- Rockingham Road Gardeners
- Ronald West Court
- Sacred Heart Church
- Scott Cooper, Photographer
- Serco
- Shelthorpe Community Garden Project
- Siding's Park Area Residents' Association
- Stonebow Washlands Group
- Student Action Volunteers
- The Tuesday Afternoon Gardening Club
- Thorpe Acre Residents Association
- Three Close Tenants' Association
- Transition Loughborough – Community Allotment
- Transition Loughborough – Community Orchard
- United Reformed Church
- Val Wilson Court Gardening Group
- Warwick Way Action Group (WAGS)
- Wolsey Way Gardeners

With thanks to Mike Jones, Pat and Harry Cook, GROW Loughborough, idverde, Glebe House, Loughborough University, Leicestershire County Council and Charnwood Borough Council for providing the images used within the portfolio.



Loughborough in
BLOOM